

Appl. No. 10/039,527
Amdt. dated April 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 22, 2003

Claims 1, 6, 9 and 13 are amended as indicated. Claims 5 and 15-21 are cancelled. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) In a method of making a reclosable bag, a method comprising:
A method of making a reclosable bag comprising:

feeding a zipper tape having at least one splotched portion past an optical sensor that optically detects opacity variations in said zipper tape;

optically detecting said splotched portion to produce a signal; and

actuating a cutter for cutting said zipper tape in response to said signal to create a selected portion of the zipper tape; and

sealing the selected portion of the zipper tape to a web.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of optically detecting said splotched portion includes the step of optically detecting zipper strip opacity variations and said step of optically detecting comprises determining a thickness of said splotched portion by changes in the opacity of portions of said zipper strip.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method of claim 2 in which said step of determining comprises comparing said thickness of said splotched portion to a reference predetermined thickness of the zipper tape.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising splotching said zipper tape multiple times to create a series of splotches along the length of the zipper tape.

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (currently amended): A method for sealing a portion of a zipper tape to a web, said zipper tape having a splotch along the length of the zipper tape, said splotch having a thickness

Appl. No. 10/039,527
Amdt. dated April 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 22, 2003

less than the zipper tape thickness and an opacity different than the zipper tape, the method comprising:

providing an elevator having a platform for receiving a portion of zipper tape;
depositing the portion of zipper tape onto the platform by feeding the zipper tape onto the platform and past an optical sensor that optically detects variations in the thickness opacity of said zipper tape, until said optical sensor detects a splotched portion in the zipper tape being fed;
positioning a web section above the platform;
positioning a sealing head over the web section for heating the web section; and
elevating the platform towards the web section until the portion of zipper tape on the platform comes into contact with the web section, thereby forming a seal between the zipper tape and the web section.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method of claim 6 wherein said sealing head is in contact with the web section when the portion of zipper tape on the platform comes into contact with the web section.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of perforating the web section.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of claim 8 wherein the web section [[if]] is perforated by a knife positioned above the web section.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method of claim 8 wherein the web section is perforated prior to the portion of zipper tape on the platform being sealed to the web section.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 6 wherein the seal is substantially airtight.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 6 wherein the seal is substantially watertight.

Appl. No. 10/039,527
Amtd. dated April 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 22, 2003

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method of claim 6 wherein the portion of zipper tape is created by feeding a zipper tape until a splotched portion crosses the optical sensor, thereby detecting said splotched portion to obtain a signal from the optical sensor, and cutting said zipper tape in response to said signal to create the portion of zipper tape on the platform.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 6 wherein the method is repeated to seal a plurality of zipper tapes to the web and further comprising the step of winding the resulting web onto a winder.

Claims 15-21 (cancelled).